

## Smith Sticks With Pack

Written by Mike Kelly

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Former Appalachian State University linebacker D.J. Smith has made the grade with the Super Bowl champion Green Bay Packers.

Smith, who was taken by the Packers in the sixth round (186th pick overall) of the NFL Draft last April, is currently on the active roster and he's just four days away from playing in his first regular-season NFL game (Thursday night, September 8). Smith made an impact with his new team by racking up 19 tackles in four pre-season games, which included one tackle-for-loss.

He was tied for the team lead in tackles with Pat Lee. But stepping in and making an immediate impact is nothing new for Smith. He played on four consecutive Class 4A state championship teams at Independence High School, and he won a national title with ASU in 2007.

Smith, as a true freshman, finished fourth in the Southern Conference and second on the Mountaineers with 121 tackles, which included 47 solo stops. He played in 15 games that season, starting nine for an ASU team that was 13-2 and won its third consecutive national championship by simply destroying Delaware in the title game. His tackle total that season was the highest by an ASU freshman since collegiate Hall of Famer and NFL Pro Bowler Dexter Coakley recorded 159 in 1993.

A two-time All-America, Smith registered 525 tackles as a four-year starter at ASU. He is second all-time in ASU history and fourth in SoCon history in tackles. Smith and Coakley are also the only players in ASU history to register 500 stops in their careers.

Smith, who finished his career as the active leader in tackles at the NCAA Division I FCS level, made 50 consecutive starts at ASU. His streak began midway through his freshman year and it ended when the Mountaineers lost to Villanova in the national quarterfinals at Kidd Brewer Stadium last December.

The Packers open the season Thursday night, September 8 at home against the New Orleans Saints.

**NOTES:** Virginia Tech coach Frank Beamer, who picked up his 199th win with the Hokies Saturday afternoon against ASU, was given a contract extension through the 2016 season.

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